

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT

**Working Party on the Strategic Framework and the
Programme Budget, sixty-third session**
Geneva, 21–23 November 2012

Opening Plenary
General statements by regional groups
Speaker: Indonesia on behalf of the Group of 77 and China

Wednesday, 21 November 2012

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GROUP OF 77 & CHINA
GENEVA

Statement of the Group of 77 and China
by
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Indonesia to the United Nations, WTO and Other
International Organizations in Geneva/ Chairman of the Group of 77 and China
H.E. Ambassador Triyono Wibowo
at the Opening of the 63rd Working Party
Geneva, 21 November 2012

Mr. Chairman, H.E. Mr. Thomas Fitschen (Germany)
Mr. Deputy Secretary-General,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. At the outset, allow me on behalf of the Group of 77 and China to congratulate you and the members of the Bureau on your election. Let me assure you Mr. Chairman, that the Group of 77 and China under your able leadership and wise guidance will engage constructively throughout this meeting to enable it produce realistic, balanced, workable and yet visionary outcomes.

Mr. Chairman,

2. Our task takes on added importance in the fact that we will be working on the budget for the next biennium, one in which the 50th anniversary of UNCTAD will fall, the MDG review in 2015, as well as the preparatory process for the next conference.

3. It is also a reality that difficult choices will have to be made given that there are constraints we are facing recently, and consequently we may have to make some difficult choices. I would like therefore to highlight some key principles and points for consideration at this session of the Working Party.

4. First, at this crucial time, we expect that UNCTAD will not scale back on its delivery to developing countries. We continue to expect the accomplishment of the Accra Accord and Doha Mandate. These efforts take on added urgency in view of the review of the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals in 2015, and the elaboration of the post-2015 development framework.

5. It is important to recall that in 2014, along the way to 2015, we will also celebrate the 50th anniversary of UNCTAD, an event that we expect to commemorate in a variety of ways through retrospective examination of what have been accomplished, as well as a prospective focus on how UNCTAD's impact can be magnified in the coming years.

6. In view of the historical and symbiotic relationship between the Group of 77 and China and the secretariat, we also look forward to the continued excellent support we have been receiving, and we look forward to this ongoing excellent cooperation especially as we prepare for the 50th anniversary of the Group of 77 and China which coincides to the day with the establishment of UNCTAD.

7. Our collective work in the years ahead will therefore entail a focused effort through the three pillars. The analytical pillar must continue to analyze the global economic situation and present viable solutions for our consideration. Technical cooperation; and the servicing of the intergovernmental machinery must remain at least at its current levels, if not enhanced.

8. Indeed, the key outcome from Doha was the strengthening of the engagement in the intergovernmental machinery, and perhaps the most important outcome of the JIU process thus far has been the emphasis on the key role of member states.

9. Consequently, in the program narrative, we expect each section to explicitly reference preparations for both UNCTAD's 50th anniversary as well as for post 2015 development framework. These activities, after all, would also significantly impact on the preparations for UNCTAD XIV.

10. The program narrative should therefore include a broad spectrum of activities including briefings to member states, preparation of the compendium of development thinking we expect as one of the main outcomes of the 50th anniversary of UNCTAD, as well as a series of intergovernmental deliberations at the formal and informal levels. We would also like to see some reference to supporting member states, at their request, in the various processes ahead including the 50th anniversary of the Group of 77 and China.

Mr. Chairman,

11. The second principle we would like to underscore is that UNCTAD's contribution to the forthcoming processes should be tangible, meaningful, and keeping with UNCTAD's finest traditions. We therefore expect specific innovative ideas to contribute to the global debate going into 2015. Ideas include strengthening the global economic system; the role of migrants in development including especially the trade dimension; the role of oceans in development; and enhancing the impact of science and technology on the advancement of development and the global development agenda.

12. The third principle we would like to emphasize is a critical one: that is the nature of economies that may be imposed on UNCTAD. If as we expect resources are dwindling and there are areas where we must look to for economies, we expect that these would take into account the expressed wishes of member states as articulated here in the Working Party, as well as in other intergovernmental discussions including on the JIU report. On this point we wish to emphasize that if economies need to be made, they should be in "back office" operations rather than frontline operations that directly benefit member states.

Mr. Chairman,

13. Going into the recommendations of the JIU report, we expect that such economies would take place either in areas where UNOG can assume some of the functions, such as human resources management, and other administrative support. We also expect that more substantive work could be done by the divisions rather than by consultants, hence bringing UNCTAD's analytical work back to the core and closer to the tradition of having a strong core capacity. We also expect that travels could be reduced and more emphasis placed on the use of videoconferencing facilities.

14. On the other hand, we expect that front office entities such as the substantive divisions and other units supporting the tangible work of the three pillars, such as the Technical Cooperation Service, and the Intergovernmental Support Service, will remain in their current strengths and configurations to continue to provide us the support we have come to expect.

15. Finally, as we begin our deliberations, I wish to underscore once again the importance of consensus-building and constructive engagement. We have accomplished much in the last few years in terms of enhancing the spirit of North-South cooperation.

16. It is only natural, however, that in the course of any meaningful relationship there will be challenges; that there will be trials. We have had those, and we have overcome them. We have shown that in the end, with positive willingness and good faith, much can be accomplished.

17. I am therefore confident that with a spirit of cooperation to do what is right for the world, and to build a stronger and more satisfactory consensus on development, we will also do good for UNCTAD. I would like therefore to express to our partners once again the commitment of the Group of 77 and China to positive and constructive engagement, and I look forward to the further strengthening of our intergovernmental process leading to a stronger and better future for UNCTAD.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

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